THE COMMONWEAL

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STARVATION AND WAR

THOUGH Mr. Hoover's Armistice Day speech was never trivial, it rose to great heights through the somewhat venturesome proposal of a new idea. We have grown unaccustomed to this sort of thing from our Presidents. Mr. Wilson was the last chief executive to offer ideas, and he was possibly a little too hasty and too generous. What can be said for Mr. Hoover? "I have held," he declared, "that food ships should be made free of any interference in times of war. . . . We should remove starvation of women and children from the weapons of warfare. . . . The rapid growth of industrial civilization during the last half-century has created in many countries populations far in excess of their domestic food supply and thus steadily weakened their natural defenses. As a consequence, protection for overseas or imported supplies has been one of the most impelling causes of increasing naval armaments and military alliances."

We imagine that nobody is very proud of a code of martial chivalry which rules that war-time blockades may starve men, women and children into submission. It is not pleasant to remember that the soldiers of the Confederacy had to get on without essential medicines, or that Belgium was fed with a meagre spoon. Today the thought is even more horrible. Science can rush to the aid of a beleaguered population and (as in Germany) sustain life through food substitutes which seriously impair health. The sight of Rhenish children well-nigh broke the hearts of American soldiers, many of whom lost all interest in victory when they beheld among its causes scrofula and pernicious anaemia in wholesale lots. Nobody saw more of this kind of thing than Mr. Hoover; and we believe that his appeal represents, over and above American sentiment, the American conscience.

The blockade tradition nevertheless has its legal status. This may be said to repose at present upon three things: The naval power of certain nations is sufficient to keep food supplies from their enemies; international law recognizes the right to enforce a blockade over and against neutral peoples eager to sell supplies; and the "economic measures" which the League of Nations may appeal to in opposing an outlaw government certainly include interference with the commissary. Let us examine all of these in their relation to the government of the United States. First, it is abundantly clear that naval parity must mean, if anything, that the seas are open to food shipments if

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Washington desires them to be and if the right of blockade be abrogated. This right could be relegated to the scrap-heap of outmoded legislation by an international treaty. There remains, accordingly, only the problem created by the League of Nations.

It is, one must concede, a very difficult problem. Statesmanship might, in theory, quite easily reconcile Mr. Hoover's humanitarianism with the insistence upon sanctions emphasized by the League covenant. But European public opinion is involved and remains dedicated to a number of hostile convictions. The nations of the old world feel that they have devised machinery to insure concerted action against a possible aggressor. Looking upon war as a disturbance to which societies are inevitably exposed, they hope to avert most attacks by making them so costly and unpopular that governments will think hard before giving marching orders. To them all it has been a matter of sincere regret (and also of annoyance) that the United States has steadily refused to join this effort. Since Wilson's time they have listened to one President after another declare that America must go its own way in dealing with international affairs.

Now Mr. Hoover's suggestion does undoubtedly weaken the sanctions upon which Geneva can rely, however strongly one may feel that the business of starving women and children is indefensible. It is essentially a move to prevent war by removing one of its causes. The argument runs pretty much as follows: Competitive armaments undermine the permanence of international peace; the insecurity of a nation's food supply obliges it to arm for protection of that supply; and therefore an international guarantee against starvation, upheld by a strong United States navy on a free ocean, will destroy the necessity for certain kinds of armament. Europe is not accustomed to thinking in these terms. It does not, perhaps, realize the extent to which Washington might be prepared to defend a newly granted right to keep open the channels of food supply. Assuredly there is need, at this point, for another sanction. If the United States were a member of the League, all could be accomplished without too much difficulty. But as things are now, the move appears temporarily to have ended in a stalemate.

We believe, however, that the President's reasoning is utterly sound and unusually appealing. As people think it over—and owing to differing circumstances they must be allowed plenty of time to do so—they are likely to feel that a new concept of justice has been advocated and that refusal to consider it will afflict the social conscience. Once that moment arrives, the practical obstacles in the path will be removed. Meanwhile we wish that French opposition to the idea had not been so pronounced. After all, why should Paris think that in case a revival of war-time hatreds were to arm Germany once again, a blockade would be effective? Is M. Briand the only man in all Gaul who can think internationally.

WEEK BY WEEK

THE importance of the recent negotiations between Germany and Poland does not seem to have been realized generally on this side of the Atlantic. With Germany agreeing to compensate from its own treasury the Germans who suffered from the revision of the Upper Silesian frontier, and with Poland promising to cease the liquidation of German property, a fair start has been made toward clearing up one of the ugliest situations in Europe. Both countries have made great sacrifices; their reward is the end of the numerous financial quarrels which have engendered so much hostility between them. And soon a commercial treaty will be concluded, removing one more obstacle to the development of that friendship which would be the only satisfactory answer to the problems arising from the existence of the Polish Corridor. Here is a work of the most far-reaching implication to the peace of the world, yet it has received only cursory attention in the press.

Germany and Poland

THE real strength of President Hoover's Armistice Day address was the sincerity with which it was uttered, and the impression which that sincerity must make upon a Europe not unacquainted with the man. In the confidence with which he spoke of international agreements, and in the suggestions he offered, he went as far as anyone has gone since the time of Woodrow Wilson. He would enlarge the State Department, enter the World Court, strengthen the Kellogg pact and codify international law. Concerning armaments he said that America does not wish "one gun or one armed man beyond that necessary for the defense of our people." And, "We will reduce our naval strength in proportion to any other. . . . It cannot be too low for us." Now one reason why his remarks on food ships were everywhere selected as of greatest importance may be that the suggestion rises so naturally from his own experience. Probably no other man in the world could have won so immediate and wide a hearing for that plan. To the world at large, Mr. Hoover is still the man who fed the starving during the great war. Surely the desire to prevent a recurrence of some of the miseries which he witnessed in those days has been with him since, and this is the result.

Mr. Hoover: Further Comment

WHAT commends the idea, at first, is that it offers security to those nations which are most in fear of blockade, and consequently most suspicious of any effort to reduce naval strength. To France and Italy, for instance, it is an argument for the relinquishment of the submarine. If France has no need for harassing a blockade of its own shores, and if it is prevented from establishing a food blockade on its enemy, then it has no great need for the submarine. We expect a very lively and prolonged debate over

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the value of the President's suggestion as a preventive of war. Certainly there is something to be said for the notion that we shall not avoid war by pretending that we can make it comfortable, gentlemanly and "humane." The fear of war is the beginning of peace. And perhaps those scientists who insist that the cause of peace can best be served by developing all the possibilities of chemical and bacteriological warfare are on the right track. Give a dozen laboratories enough time and money, and they will make war so terrible that no nation would dare have recourse to it.

Events in Mexico

THE campaign south of the Rio Grande has run its course, although the issue is not sufficiently clear, as we write, to justify interpretation. That is reserved for next week, when we hope to summarize as much as can be learned of the Mexican situation. It may simply be indicated here that all observers have been deeply impressed and somewhat astonished by the trend of events. Señor Vasconcelos managed to inject into his effort a fund of political education and of constructive suggestion which any nation might well envy. The tenor of his activities reminds one not a little, in fact, of the Progressive campaign in 1912. In both cases political philosophy occupied the centre of the stage, and the endeavor to convince an electorate contrasted strangely with the usual formalities of electioneering. What is particularly noticeable in Mexico, however, is the comparative absence of bloody disturbances. There were a number of clashes, to be sure, but the mere fact that an opposition candidate could go where he pleased and say what he liked is a most reassuring phenomenon. We hope it means that our neighbor to the south has now been fed up on violence and is settling down, in a spirit of sincere desire for normal living, to the business of remedying its affairs—a knotty enough undertaking.

What Not to Do With Money

SLOWLY recovering from the recent plunge into financial abysses, the nation has searched rather diligently for a reliable diagnosis of the past and a convincing index to the potential future. Good and bad characteristics are, it would seem, neatly assorted. Commenting on the influence of world gold shipments and the disturbed condition of credit, the always intelligent bulletin of the National City Bank is cheered by the thought that no important failures resulted from the decline in stocks. Others are discussing the part played by foreign buyers, and wondering how many of these have been cleaned out to an extent which precludes their earnest participation in another advance. The great majority of observers, however, seek to use psychology as the best explanation. Several factors in the creation of this psychology have come in for frank, though as yet not wholly dependable, criticism. Optimistic market diagnosticians who argued that the value of stocks must increase because the producing wealth of the country is increasing have been soundly trounced by their foes and probably will not retort until "the situation changes." Investment trusts have been accused of using their earnings in a boom market to sell stock. Whatever theory be accepted as most satisfactory, one is sure that the complexity of the financial world has been demonstrated to quite a few persons. Sensible investing may, after all, be more than a matter of getting aboard the bull band-wagon. It may mean getting and following competent advice, based upon a thorough scrutiny of available industrial information.

American Biography

ANOTHER volume (the third) of The Dictionary of American Biography having appeared, one may pause to applaud this unusually important publication. We have noticed in particular the sketches of the Calverts, so interesting to those who look back upon the colony of Maryland as to a kind of spiritual heritage; and we believe they typify the fairness and accuracy with which this whole work has been conceived. The editors have spared no pains to secure the best available contributors, and these in turn have usually made it a point of honor to consult the pertinent sources of information. Here and there one may come upon an error of fact, or a verdict with which one does not agree, but when the usual allowances for human nature have been made the total achievement seems genuinely distinguished. It is impossible to overestimate the importance of such a dictionary. Scholarship in the stricter sense—or education in the broader one—has only begun to take an interest in the American past. A new concern with our national literature, seen as something far more extensive than the work of a few New England poets, is active in the schools, and the current absorption in biography has at least this advantage, that it resurrects dominant personalities all of whom have left some imprint on the social mind. In the light of such developments, Dr. Allen Johnson is entitled to be known simply as the "Doctor Johnson" of our time.

The Bishops' Meeting

CATHOLICS will be deeply grateful for the abundance of news which has been made available regarding the recent annual meeting of the American bishops. Though much that was determined was of a purely administrative character and so does not lend itself to comment, we wish to call attention to three matters of particular interest to ourselves. The first is the acceptance, contingent upon settlement of the financial problem involved, of the National Broadcasting Company's offer to provide a nation-wide weekly Catholic program. While the value of radio addresses remains pretty much a topic for conjecture, there is every reason why spokesmen for the Church should utilize this certainly very promising method of address. The second concerns the

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news service supplied by the National Catholic Welfare Conference. Critics of this have suggested that part of the executive control ought to be lodged with the Catholic Press Association. This opinion was not acceded to, although the door was opened wider to those who have legitimate dissatisfactions. We are glad to welcome this solution of the problem. It has always seemed to us that committee control of a news service would be impractical—that, granted adequate direction, it will prosper better without outside supervision. The third matter, finally, is the withdrawal from the Bishops' Administrative Committee of Archbishop Dowling, of St. Paul. Of course he has found an admirable successor in Archbishop McNicholas, of Cincinnati; but those who have followed his career, and who know the intelligence it has revealed and the courageous self-sacrifice it has entailed, will deeply regret that ill health has sapped the energies of Archbishop Dowling. One can only hope, with the official resolution, that "Our Lord in His great goodness may restore health and strength" to him.

The Final Clemenceau

WE SHALL not review In the Evening of My Thought, by Georges Clemenceau, a copy of which Messrs. Houghton Mifflin were kind enough to send us. The book is, however, a phenomenon which seems to invite meditation. Here is an old man, veteran of many political battles and famed for the aggressive nationalism with which he fought out the last months of the war. A rabid anti-clerical all his days, Clemenceau has carried over into senility the rationalism which virtually dominated his country during the years of his maturity. And here now, finally, is the exposition and the defense. Two immense volumes of mechanistic apologetic, which probably got themselves published primarily because the lustre of a famous name might help (as the blurb tells us) to "arouse passions and excite controversy." If any man can be found having sufficient patience to read through these tomes stuffed with rhetorical monologues, second-hand science and perilous figures of speech, they should at least supply him with a knowledge of everything which the normal mechanist has to say for his theory of life. We are of the opinion that such a man, who would have to be exceptionally ascetic and self-sacrificing, could then render the spiritual community no little good by reducing the subject-matter to a definite number of topics and appending some clarifying comment.

CLEMENCEAU, it is clear, remains perennially conscious of his ambition and purpose. The first is interested in "drawing up a balance sheet, such as a man of ordinary cultivation can today prepare, of our positive knowledge of the world and of ourselves, amply annotated with theories and even with hypotheses still undergoing verification." As a result, one goes upon excursions into history, anthropology, natural science, metaphysics, comparative religion and many kindred subjects, at a pace which makes Mr. Wells seem verily a snail. And the purpose? One fancies it is stated at the close of Volume I: to "attain the noblest emotion of the humanity of the universe." If both prove distressing to minds which like caution and accuracy, one must not forget that it is precisely the chance to arrive at facile syntheses which is the glory and the danger of modern culture. One has only to read with more than customary industry. But how futile a venture it all is has been demonstrated perfectly by Clemenceau. If he had written his book fifty years ago, it would have made exactly the same points. It would merely have seemed more convincing and easier to read.

Who Builds the Cruisers?

IT IS reported that the President may refuse to grant more contracts for our new cruisers to the three shipbuilding companies which were represented by Mr. Shearer at the Geneva naval conference. If he so decides, no one will feel that the companies have been unjustly dealt with, especially as two of them have already received contracts, each for one of the ships. Certainly the government would not suffer. As a matter of fact, contracts for four cruisers now under construction in private yards include figures from two to three million dollars higher than estimates for the two under construction at Puget Sound and Mare Island. There are seven navy yards equipped to build the new ships; the work can be done there as well as anywhere. During the spring there were many debates in Congress about the problem of keeping these yards in a healthy working condition. President Hoover can solve that problem very simply by awarding them the rest of the cruiser contracts, and at the same time rebuke the shipbuilding lobbyists in the one way they can understand.

Organizing against Encephalitis

A FEW months ago The Commonweal published an article which outlined the symptoms and the ravages of epidemic encephalitis—the scourge which has come to be popularly (and incorrectly) known as "sleeping sickness." The author, who had spent a considerable period collating and checking his findings, indicated the desperate need of research on this mysterious and incapacitating disease, and suggested that private philanthropy could not more finely show itself than by endowing such research. It now appears that this was actually done more than a year ago. The commission which has been directing, for that interval, the investigations made possible by the generosity of Dr. William J. Matheson, has just published a report of the ground covered thus far. There have been, of course, ever since 1915, when the first scientific record of epidemic encephalitis was made, a growing number of separate workers engaged in isolating its symptoms and experimenting in its treat-

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ment; but the Matheson commission is the only clearing house for such information and theories in existence at present. This lends particular interest to its first report, and particular value to its plan for an intensive two-year study of several hundred victims of the disease at the Neurological Institute Building of the New York Medical Centre.

THE preliminary work, as embodied in the report, has included an exhaustive survey of the history of this strange and sinister malady. Its recorded career, though brief, has been devastating, and so widespread that data have been collected from all over the world. The translations and digests of these records form the nucleus of a library which should have tremendous practical and historical value. In addition, trips of investigation were made to those European medical centres which have conducted promising work in encephalitis treatment. One fact emerges as a constant in all these inquiries: there is a wide divergence among even the most authoritative men as to the symptoms of epidemic encephalitis, and there are three totally separate theories, each with unexceptionable backing, as to its cause. Indeed, there is substantial agreement only on its melancholy results, and the fact that it is apparently spreading throughout the world. This does not, perhaps, outline what may be called a very rosy immediate situation. But it carries infinitely more hope for the future than it did before Dr. Matheson's humane and charitable spirit prompted this first concerted effort to meet it. There is no doubt that, given time and such an opportunity as this, the science of medicine and the dedicated workers which it attracts in such illustrious numbers, will perform a miracle in this field also.

A Wet Tariff

THE final days of the special session of Congress draw wearily to a close but even in the tedium of tariff schedule deliberations there is some inherent humor. Not pure humor, for pure humor cannot be derived from perceiving the failings of others, but nevertheless humor which will aid the digestion of the forthright. For the Senate has again been up to Volsteadian pranks. Perhaps it was agitated by the revelations proving that members vote dry and dine wet, and did not understand there was no further need to protect an American industry which no longer officially exists. Anyhow, the Senate gravely approved, with only two minor committee changes, the whole schedule of the spirits and wine tariffs. Senator Blaine, insurgent Republican of Wisconsin, should be credited with inquiring why, in view of the prohibition laws, there were any tariffs on imported liquor. Of course the importation of liquor, except for medicinal purposes, is legislated against, and alcoholic liquor for this use should not be burdened with a tariff. Senators should take care lest it be charged that they are favoring, for a consideration, those few surviving American brewers who are still permitted to brew the drink that heals.

A Corner in Descendants

THE statement of Miss Jean Stephenson, a Washington genealogist, that Woodrow Wilson, Andrew W. Mellon and Alfred E. Smith all were descended from "one ancient Irish family" is what one might call inclusive. It is hard indeed to think of another sentence extensive enough in denotation to match it. That a red man, a black man and a white man should have the same ancestor, that an Eskimo, a Sussex peasant and an ancient Roman should be proved to have sprung from a common stock, would not impinge upon the imagination so startlingly as that these three strongly separate types and these three completely different destinies, had one origin. And yet it is a romantic idea. What a light it sheds on the quality of the Mulvahills of West Meath! As ancestors they excel Charlemagne or Alfred the Great or Napoleon. And the dramatic simultaneity with which that quality has directed its manifestations is also deserving of praise. Other families may scatter their worth down the centuries, but the Mulvahills of West Meath have chosen to concentrate upon one age, giving it one of its greatest financial geniuses, one of its supreme political idealists and one of its most radiantly human and incorruptibly honest political rulers, in a single burst of symphonic splendor. And which one of these descendants, we cannot help wondering, are the Mulvahills of West Meath proudest of now?

Traditions Wanted

WE AMERICANS have been brought up humbly to confess that our education is utilitarian and unhallowed by antiquity. Perhaps that is why anything, however anomalous or irrational, which has crystallized under the name of "tradition" in Europe's seats of learning, has always seized upon our imaginations. Thus some of us have yearned over the sabres and steins of Old Heidelberg by which, respectively, the students' brows and chins have been cicatrized, and their heroic potative powers developed, for generations; thus every American schoolboy knows that the cricket fields of Eton won the Battle of Waterloo. It now appears that both these traditions are menaced. Drinking in German universities has been so curtailed since the war that its artistic aspects are admitted to be lost, and the Reichstag is considering a bill to make all dueling illegal. At Eton, if an authority like Mr. William Bolitho is to be believed, the danger is less specific and thus more deadly. Boys still go there mainly to play cricket; but the social entity called a gentleman has altered, says Mr. Bolitho, has become less individual, less self-sustaining, more of the herd; and this alteration is disastrously altering Eton itself, along with the other great public schools. It begins to look as though we Americans would have to grow some traditions of our own.

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BENEVOLENCE IN BOSTON

THE statue of Phillips Brooks, which stands in the very heart of Boston, must recall to many passers-by the sincerity with which New England has pursued its various spiritual quests. To some it will also be a reminder of Brooks's willingness to respect decisions which the consciences of others had reached. "We walk the bridge of life," he said. "Can we not trust its safety on the two great resting-places of God's wisdom?" To leave in the Divine hands all final judgment of how any man has walked the route of the soul's quest is certainly the first needful thing in every endeavor to promote friendly understanding between disparate religious groups in America. And a new stage in that endeavor may be said to have been marked by the recent conference, at Harvard College, of Catholic, Protestant and Jewish citizens. The Calvert Round Table, which acted as host, planned very carefully for the event and brought together a large and really distinguished assemblage. It is likely enough that more cannot be hoped for from a meeting of this kind; and the results may, therefore, be considered typical of what the method affords.

Quite naturally the emphasis was divided between the key-note addresses and public discussions. In both fields there was enough variety to show forth the depth and complexity of the problem. President Lowell gave a remarkably fine address, in which a veteran student of public opinion offered a diagnosis of human nature. "Is hostility necessary to the life of an institution?" he asked, reflecting on the evidence which seemingly leads to an affirmative reply and on the hope that the future may nevertheless attain to a transcendent denial. He concluded with a memorable phrase: "We do not want an international good-will which is based on indifference to the welfare of one's own country." And the obvious corollary was that, in religion, mankind can welcome no tolerance which rests upon readiness to abrogate the rights of each one's own spiritual communion.

This last truth was pretty well kept sight of in Boston. There was, of course, some speaking in a more romantic key. A very able Jewish rabbi seemed eager to hold that analysis of our beliefs must ultimately make "what is held in common" vastly more important than the dividing lines. But though there is some value in an enthusiastic zeal for benevolence, it does not seem to us (nor, probably, to the majority of those who attended the conference) intellectually hard enough to cut well against the world's grain. One exceedingly well qualified spokesman for the Catholic position—the Reverend Michael J. Ahern, S.J.—tried rather to rest the case for tolerance upon a reasoned defense of the pseudo-Pauline sentence, "unity in necessary things, liberty in matters that are dubious, and charity always."

Religion thus becomes, through its dual insistence upon the inviolability of fundamental truth and upon the primacy of charity, the mightiest astringent of hates which are often, erroneously, attributed to it. Indeed, the conference discussions strongly tended toward acceptance of this view. Religious misrepresentations, vocational unfairness and community co-operation were all frankly discussed. In almost every case, one could note an evident readiness to feel that the sources of prejudice were historically associated with racial, economic or social conflicts. Sometimes, of course, they are rooted in an irrationality suggestive of the old couplet which confesses to misliking Dr. Fell, though—"The reason why I cannot tell." More than one shrewdly philosophic Bostonian commented upon this aspect of intolerance and upon the folly of attributing it to a religious motive.

It was pointed out, for instance, that vocational discriminations on the basis of religious creed are common in Boston. But the explanations offered were business or professional expediency rather than doctrine. Rabbi Landman, editor of the American Hebrew, saw the causes of prevalent fears of "organized Judaism" in the circumstance that sudden and enforced migration to the United States compelled millions of Jews to huddle in large cities, where their lack of familiarity with the nation's speech and customs stamped them as aliens. It was admitted that, in New England, racial groups long ostracized from political influence had sometimes abused this when the tables had been turned. Most of those who spoke about community coöperation likewise held that much more depends upon the qualities and prejudices of the individual than upon the qualities and prejudices of the group.

But though there was this tendency to make distinctions and to reserve the word "religious" for matters with which it can properly be associated, many vital differences of belief were openly presented and discussed. Some Catholic and Protestant speakers consciously introduced the apologetic note; and there was not a little good exposition of teaching on such subjects as miracles, education and social-mindedness. One felt, however, that such conferences as this are designed for statements regarding grievances rather than for the resolution of differences. Indeed it seemed as if (though Boston may be, from this point of view, a somewhat exceptional community) the legitimacy of differences in the world of religion was attributed to conscience rather than temper.

As we sat and listened, two conclusions forced themselves upon us: first, church union (excepting where it means unification of allied Protestant groups) is at present an impossible dream; second, peace between the churches is practicable and warmly desired by virtually all intelligent people. Church union depends upon agreement regarding vital religious teachings, and this cannot be reached through any form of adult education known to us. Certainly it will never be attained at conferences, which do not even lend themselves well to apologetic speaking. The point was

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made, under a different heading, by an eminent and eloquent Boston priest, who argued that the basic divergences should be accepted as primal facts. But peace between the churches? That depends largely, it seems to us, upon widespread recognition of the fact that religion is the cure rather than the cause of many prevalent hatreds. The Boston conference was certainly headed this way, and the spectacle was interesting and promising.

It will be difficult to effect and propagate this recognition. One feels that the conference idea is one way out, and that it is bound to increase in popularity. The Calvert Round Table announced its intention of holding other meetings and of lending aid to other communities interested in the plan. Then there are affiliated types of intellectual and social coöperation which serve the same purpose more indirectly. We are interested in them all, and we feel that when the Catholic position is upheld with the ability and courtesy which prevailed in Boston, it redounds greatly to the credit of the Church. There are just one or two suggestions we wish to offer, in the belief that participation in this and similar conferences has taught us something.

If animosities which bear upon religion can so frequently be attributed to social or racial factors, why should we not study these more carefully? The modern approach to all such problems is genetic—that is, it pays as much attention to diagnosis as to treatment. Just now our attitude toward bigotry may not unfairly be compared with the conviction that some old mother's remedy will cure all ills. We apply courtesy or liberality to a situation which needs investigation and probing before any kind of antiseptic will do much good. There are at least a dozen aspects of American life which ought to be studied from this viewpoint: fear of the Papacy, prohibition, the Church in politics, education. Why does not some gentleman of means, interested in this essential matter, provide a fund to subsidize research of this character? Or why cannot a chair devoted to the religious implications of sociology be established in universities under Catholic, Protestant and Jewish auspices?

In the next place, we are convinced that the desire—manifested at the Boston conference and elsewhere—for reading lists is genuine. People need and want literature which is intelligently expository, which bears in mind the requirements of the group, and which is not primarily apologetic. There are a number of such books, and others will doubtless appear. But the literature is at present either not well known or wanting. Why should not some qualified person be given the task of acting as bibliographer, and supplied with sufficient funds to answer inquiries by mail or in person? Such practical helps are of immense value and will be increasingly sought after. Meanwhile we add our very deep appreciation of the work done by the Calvert Round Table of Boston. It was a genuinely civic endeavor, of which the proponents may be proud and for which they deserve gratitude.

ILLITERATE AMERICA

DURING the summer a good deal was expected of Mr. Hoover's new-found interest in the problem of illiteracy, and last week "with the approval of the President," Secretary Wilbur announced the appointment of an "advisory committee on national illiteracy." The committee does not meet until December, but it may not be unfair, meanwhile, to speculate upon its probable accomplishments. It can try to stimulate the sentiment which already exists, vaguely, but generally, that "something ought to be done" about illiteracy. With the help of the press it can engage in propaganda, and hope for effect. It can suggest effective methods to be followed by the states and communities. Mr. Wilbur refers, for instance, to the "new agencies" now being developed for educational purposes. One committee is studying the possibilities of radio; its work being handicapped, possibly by the fact that the people whom it is most necessary to reach do not often own a receiving set. Then the Office of Education "has already arranged for certain educational courses by correspondence that . . . will be made available to any isolated family." Eventually, of course, many such opportunities will supplement the skimpy educational facilities provided in backward sections of the country. They will help people who are already partly literate, and who are willing to learn. They will be of greatest advantage in adult education.

More than this the advisory committee cannot very well be expected to accomplish. For the basis of any really effective attempt to reduce illiteracy must be an extension of the primary and secondary school systems, and in the United States the administration of schools has been traditionally regarded as a local and not as a federal function. And properly so, we think. It is appalling to think of the results of a system of education standardized from Washington, open at once to the whims of Congress and to the influence of any outside group which commands a powerful lobby.

Whatever Secretary Wilbur's committee can manage to accomplish will be all to the good. At least, its work will represent the first serious attempt to lessen the evils of a very shameful condition. No American can feel any genuine satisfaction with progress in the United States so long as we remain among the most illiterate of all occidental nations. And we cannot excuse ourselves, as formerly, on the presence of many foreign-born among us. Large numbers of them have come from home lands which have a higher average literacy than the United States. And for some years literacy has been a requirement for entrance into this country, yet there are more than five millions here who cannot read or write in any language. Most of our aliens are in the cities, yet the average illiteracy of rural districts is almost twice that of the cities, and it has often been pointed out that the states which have attracted the fewest immigrants happen likewise to be our most backward.

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GASTONIA: ANOTHER HARPER'S FERRY

By DON WHARTON

Events in Gastonia have been widely accepted as indicative of social and industrial conditions in the new South. The following paper by a newspaperman familiar with the scene and favored to witness much of what occurred, is a statement of as much as is exact in that acceptance. Mr. Wharton draws an interesting parallel between John Brown of Harper's Ferry and Fred Beal of Gastonia. He divides the strikes in the Carolinas and Tennessee into four classes, and also provides an accurate survey of the acts of violence and the trials which followed them.—The Editors.

WHEN John Brown raided the federal arsenal at Harper's Ferry in 1859 he never could have dreamed that exactly seventy years later another New Englander would be fighting to free white men in the South from an industrial bondage which has been compared to the black slavery on the old southern plantations. Fred Beal, with his Communist strike at Gastonia, his armed guards and his radical tactics, is a twentieth-century reincarnation of John Brown. Each man is identified with an important movement: anti-slavery for Brown, labor unionization for Beal. Each grasped the wrong method, violated the statutes, was convicted before the law and failed in his immediate aim. But just as John Brown's cause was achieved later through means he did not foresee, so there are many indications that unionization of the southern textile employees will come through an agency which Beal opposes: the American Federation of Labor, advancing gradually with, rather than against, the capitalist textile interests.

The comparison of the two men does not begin with the mere historical coincidence of Brown establishing his Negro headquarters on a Virginia farm in June, 1859, and Beal defending his North Carolina strike colony in June, 1929. Nor does it close with the analogy of the Abolitionist's capture by Lee in the following October and the Communist's conviction by a Mecklenburg County jury in the same week of the same month exactly seventy years later.

Brown was supported by eastern Abolitionist leaders, who furnished him with money and supplies. The Communists of the East have done the same for Beal. And just as many historical students believe that the supporters of Brown were perhaps more interested in creating further slavery strife than hopeful of a successful insurrection, so observers today have claimed that the Communists back of Beal were more concerned with the spread of their political propaganda than the success of their strike.

There are some superficial parallels in the two exploits. Of Brown's party of twenty-two men, nineteen were under thirty. Thirty, on the other hand, was the maximum age of the sixteen strikers indicted at Gastonia. Some were mere boys. One was a girl of nineteen. Brown was tried before a Virginia court, defended by Massachusetts counsel, convicted of conspiracy, treason and murder, and hanged at Charlestown, now a part of West Virginia. Conspiracy likewise played a great part in Beal's trial before the North Carolina court, where he was defended by counsel including New York and New Jersey lawyers, convicted of second-degree murder, and sentenced to serve from seventeen to twenty years in the penitentiary at Raleigh.

There are contrasts, too: Brown, bearded, fifty-nine years old, father of twenty children, twelve of whom lived to maturity; Beal, clean-shaven, boyish, red-haired, only twenty-nine and unmarried. Brown, a religious zealot, calling on the God of Moses for aid, thinking himself the prophet of a new redemption; and Beal, the free thinker, the man without a religion; an atheist if ever there was one.

Fundamentally, however, they both stand out as fanatics. Each was an idealist, with principles upon which he would rebuild the world. Each had his system, logically developed from premises beyond which he would not stir. Each sought to revolutionize society, and each failed because that portion of society which he attacked would not be revolutionized. Brown set out to lead the slaves in an insurrection. He found that the blacks had no thought of rising to kill their masters. He was disappointed by their apathy, their bewilderment amid his talk of freedom, the lack of sufficient support from the North, and the steady hand of the law. Fred Erwin Beal and his National Textile Workers' Union encountered a similar lack of coöperation and understanding in Gastonia.

In the trial of Beal and his fifteen young associates, and the accompanying so-called anti-Communist riots, too many people have lost sight of the chief significance of the Gastonia experiment—its relation to the larger trend toward the unionization of southern workingmen, a trend which has shown especial strength this year after three decades of sporadic and unfortunate moves. They have forgotten that before Chief Aderholt was killed, most of the strikers had returned to their jobs in the Loray mill or moved to other textile centres. They have ignored the fact that this mill was running at full blast and that all but one of the other 103 textile plants in that county were untouched by the Communist agitation.

The Charlotte trial is important in showing the attempt of a judge to render justice to defendants against whom the community was highly prejudiced. How well Judge Barnhill succeeded is a matter for history and the higher courts to determine. The trial has importance for us in another, and to the South a more important, relation. Certainly it marked the

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climax of Communistic activities. Was it the conclusion? What of the dénouement? Will it retard or stimulate labor unions in that Sahara of organizations? Will it auger further development of Communist unions in the South or the success of more conservative ones under the control of the American Federation of Labor? Or, will it mark the decline of both groups?

The answers are hidden in the past. One must search the history of these cotton-mill workers whose low wages and long hours have produced a migration of textile mills from New England. The United States government statistics show that they are laboring for hours that are prohibited in some states, for wages that would be ridiculous in others. Passing through the South Atlantic piedmont one sees a few attractive mill villages with white cottages settled in the grass and trees, with handsome churches and social buildings on the corners, and modern, well-ventilated factories across the streets. There are, however, many more clusters of dismal houses. In the mills men and women are working day and night. In the huts undernourished children go to bed as the father leaves for the loom and wake as the mother trails off to the spindle. The children are young, there are only two wage-earners in the family, pennies must be counted. Once the children have grown older, their wages are added to the family income, and a new prosperity reigns.

The young people marry, more children are born, and in their homes come repetitions of the cycle of poverty, prosperity and poverty. These are the men and women and children whom southern chambers of commerce have advertised as 100 percent Americans, docile, contented with their hours, delighted at their meagre pay, antagonistic to unions, awaiting eastern exploiters. To the union leaders the ground has seemed fertile, just as to John Brown of Osawatomie the slaves of the South seemed awaiting the insurrection signal. In both cases the harvest seemed plentiful, proved scanty. The reason for the twentieth-century inaction is simple: the life of these southern textile workers is the best they have ever known. Pictured to them by foreign agitators as a curse, it has in their hearts seemed a blessing.

For the mills brought the workers from the farms. And the farms produced a more terrible life than that of the mills. While labor leaders have contrasted the misery of the mill villages with the luxury of the white-pillared homes of the mill owners, the workers have had bad dreams of the life from which they and their fathers sprang. They have remembered the long, hard days on the tenant farms of the lowlands. They have not forgotten the corn-patch poverty of the hills. The heat of the sun in the fields from sunup to sundown is not preferable to the shade cast by factory walls.

Since 1880 these people have been moving to the mills. To them it seemed natural that the entire family should work. They all worked on the farm for nothing. They had companions in the day's work and associates for the night's play. Movies came on Saturdays, old Fords stood in their back yards, and money, real money, not credit, jingled in their pockets.

The mill owners have turned every energy toward nourishing this contentment. Their paternalism, which seemed natural in the years when the mills were small, personal affairs, has become the most powerful defense against unionism. This weapon has two edges: that of social activities to make the village life more pleasant, and that of a variety of compensations for the low wages. Churches have been built, preachers paid, Y. M. C. A.'s fostered, swimming pools installed and welfare work supplied. There are free lights and water, cheap rent in the company houses, wholesale prices for coal, wood, ice and sometimes milk. Altogether, the answer of the mill owners to the cry of unionism has been highly effective. And incidentally the company houses have enabled the employers to fight unions with the weapon of evictions as well as with discharges.

Upon this stronghold both unions turned their organization guns early this year. In the spring they were aided by a restlessness among the workers, attributed by some observers to the cotton trade deflation, the part-time work, and the new efficiency methods, notably the stretch-out system whereby one worker did the labor formerly requiring several. The strike simultaneously resulting in Tennessee and North and South Carolina were of four distinct types:

In a rayon plant at Elizabethtown, Tennessee, unorganized laborers struck, rushed into the leadership of the American Federation of Labor's United Textile Workers' Union, and eventually succeeded in winning their demands.

In the South Carolina cotton mills came a series of strikes by workers also unconnected with any union. After winning most of their demands without the aid of union officials, they returned to their mills. Since then the United Textile Workers' Union has been honeycombing that section with locals; several months ago it claimed to have more than 20,000 Palmetto names on its membership cards.

The third type was at Marion, North Carolina, where the same union organized the workers, conferred with the employers and called a strike when their demands were rejected. Incidentally, out of this strike came Governor Gardner's condemnation of the obstinacy of the mill owners, and later the battle between police and strike picketers which resulted in the death of five of the latter.

The fourth type, and the most widely heralded, was called in Gastonia by the National Textile Workers' Union after several of the members recruited by Beal had been discharged by the Loray mill authorities. Starting with a walk-out of 2,000 workers, the strike failed through reckless radical management in a situa-

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tion that undoubtedly and imperatively demanded a conservative approach.

Charles G. Good, representative of the United States Department of Labor, reported on April 11 to the Bureau of Conciliation: "We can make no headway for the benefit of deserving workers unless and until they have divorced themselves from leaders who stand in the way of negotiating a fair settlement."

The Communist demands included a forty-hour week and a minimum wage of $20.00, which no company in the South could meet while competing with other firms working on the legal fifty-five and sixty-hour weeks. The demands involved an increased cost of operation, which no factory has ever been known to accept when a surplus of workers, trained for the jobs, was ready to replace the strikers.

The Communist methods were crude, involving incitement of the strikers, threats of force, talk of Communism among a people naturally conservative, and attacks upon the soldiers who were sent to guard the mill property. In turn, the strikers were antagonized by the vile utterances of the local press, the intimidation of officers of the law and threats of loafers about town. There ensued scuffling with the troops, breaking up of strikers' parades, the pillaging of union headquarters, and a score of other events which were climaxed by the fatal shooting of the city's police chief.

In contrast to these crude tactics and scanty returns has been the clever progress of the United Textile Workers' Union. Though it has encountered considerable difficulty at Elizabethtown and Marion, the United has maintained a conservative approach to the southern textile ills. Its leaders have not sent any radical agitators into the South to cry the evils of the capitalist system; it has not attempted any sudden revolution in living conditions, nor made any preposterous demands for changes of hours or wages. Softly, skilfully, surely, it has maneuvered. Six locals of the United have been extended to fifteen; thousands of new members have been secured; the union has worked in accord with both state and federal labor departments.

Of more significance than many of the strikes was the enactment early in the year of a workmen's compensation law for the state of North Carolina. The legislature was given the credit but the American Federation of Labor did the work. Its victory was consolidated by the appointment of one of its North Carolina officials to help administer the new provisions. It is now adroitly laying the foundations for other labor legislation—the reduction of the legal working week from sixty to fifty-five hours. As the sentiment for further social acts advances, it plans to reduce this to forty-eight hours, to abolish night work for women in industry, and to make changes in laws concerning child labor.

THE DOCTOR'S PROGRESS

By JAMES J. WALSH

THE visit to this country of Professor Karl Sudhoff, the founder and for many years the director of the Institute of Medical History of the University of Leipzig, the first of its kind in the world, has provided opportunity for a series of impressive academic events. On October 17 he attended the dedication of the William H. Welch Medical Library at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, and the next day made the keynote address at the inauguration of the University's Department of the History of Medicine. Later he was the guest, successively, of the faculty of the Medical School of the University of Georgetown, Washington, D. C., where he made a historical address, and of the Philadelphia Society for the History of Medicine, in connection with the College of Physicians. The following week more than three hundred invited guests assembled in the auditorium of the Rockefeller Institute to hear his address on the medical institutions which came into existence at Cos and Cnidus as the great epoch-making initiation of Greek medicine.

These events attest the awakening of interest in this country in the history of medicine. Ordinarily it is assumed that progress in medical science is so rapid that it is quite useless to know anything about preceding conditions, except for academic reasons. How little this notion is accepted by good authorities in medical science, who have themselves been leaders in bringing about medical advance, is evidenced by the erection of a magnificent building for their medical library at Johns Hopkins and its enthusiastic inauguration. And the conviction of the value of the history of medicine held by leading conservative members of the faculty is shared by a great many younger men who are themselves engaged at the present time in promoting just such medical progress as would presumably make the history of medicine mean less and less. They appreciate how much the historical background signifies for the proper understanding of modern achievement.

This was what all the speakers of the occasion emphasized. Professor Harvey Cushing, head of the Surgical Department of Harvard University, and formerly of the Johns Hopkins faculty, did not hesitate to declare that

> medicine has become so scattered and subdivided that there is a crying need for someone to lead it from the wilderness and again bind it together.

The best possible chance to accomplish this, Dr.

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Cushing said, comes from the history of medicine in coöperation with the great library. He added:

> Unfortunately the doctor, speaking by and large, is wofully ignorant of the history of his profession; indeed he is rather prone to regard bookishness as a form of swank.

Professor Cushing ended with the hope that this Department of the History of Medicine may prove to be a place where

> medicine, the foster-mother of all sciences, once more in close contact with her whole family will imbue them all with the spirit of that ancient phrase, "Where there is love of humanity there will be love of the profession."

Dr. Abraham Flexner, in his address at the inauguration of the Department, deprecated the idea that the one hope for civilization is to be forward-looking. Above all if the expression is used in the sense of catching the trend of popular opinion and yielding to it, the term would be an unfortunate description of university work. For universities must direct civilization. Whenever there is a tendency to cater to superficial and immediate demands, degeneration of education takes place. Even in the matter of progress there is failure to distinguish between ripples and waves. Living as we do in a tumultuous time as members of a tumultuous generation, there is danger that people may become infatuated with current interests and lose their perspective entirely. Even as it is, the objection has been made that university education is fostering technological training rather than a deep understanding of science. Some of Dr. Flexner's auditors at least must have realized that, just as in the later middle-ages, dialectics occupied so much time and attention that philosophy itself suffered, so in our day technics have come to replace, to an unfortunate extent, the knowledge of clinical medicine.

Professor Sudhoff, whose presence in this country resulted from the invitation to take part in the opening of the Department of the History of Medicine, went so far as to say that the physician who lacked knowledge of the history of medicine as a science was "a mere mechanic."

Here were men all of whom have in recent years been intimately in contact with educational institutions in many parts of the world. Professor Welch has just spent a year, his first sabbatical year in nearly fifty, in visiting the universities on the continent of Europe. Dr. Abraham Flexner, who is a member of the General Education Board, has spent a considerable period recently lecturing at Oxford. Professor Sudhoff, since he became Director Emeritus of the Institute for the History of Medicine at Leipzig, has made for himself a roving commission for the investigation of medical historical matters in various parts of Europe, Asia and Africa. All of these men are emphasizing the necessity for historical background if the science of our day is to be properly understood and, above all, properly applied. While modern progress is so manifest, many of the gropings of men after truth in the past are eminently suggestive, and help the members of our generation to understand their own thoughts better than they would otherwise find it possible to do. Indeed, without that background present-day medical progress becomes stilted and incapable of proper appreciation of the connotations of its own knowledge and the application of that knowledge to individuals, not as so many cases, but as human beings each of them differing from every other.

The foundation of libraries and of institutions for the cultivation of the history of science, and particularly medicine, is sure to broaden men's minds. It will make them sympathetic toward their forefathers, who tried so conscientiously to accomplish what was impossible with the limited means at their command, but who very often succeeded, by an intuition amounting to genius, in solving problems in their day that can only be thoroughly solved by the equipment at our disposal. As the result of this interest in the past, the middle-ages, once so bitterly contemned, are receiving their due mead of recognition for their achievements. Because these older men left their heritage, to a great extent, in Latin, the last few generations have been without any adequate knowledge of them. Professor Sudhoff emphasized how fine was the achievement of the very first medical school in the very first university —that of Salerno. These newer interests are making it clear that, to quote John Fiske:

> Those centuries which modern writers in their ignorance used once to set apart and stigmatize as the "dark ages" deserve rather the name bright ages, for there is a sense in which the most brilliant achievements of pagan antiquity are dwarfed in comparison with them.

Enormous Night

Enormous night is imminent,
With chasms cleft and pouring tides,
On the wan child whose strength is spent
And weeping, weeping, hides.

Vast is the solitary dark,
But prisoned in its bag of skin
The naked soul bewildered, stark,
Has a void more vast within,

Where twisting on its fiery bones
It breaks them on the body's tree,
And selfward flings appalling stones
In dark of Calvary.

Soul's cerement and marriage dress,
Winding to hell with double stain,
Is black with monstrous loneliness
And red with blood of pain:

But faith shall make the spirit whole
And love shall wash its garment white,
When imminent upon the soul
Comes the enormous night.

STANLEY J. KUNITZ.

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READING THE BIBLE IN SCHOOL

By MARK O. SHRIVER

SOONER or later the Supreme Court of the United States will be called on to determine whether the reading of the Bible in classrooms "without sectarian comment" is or is not an infringement of religious liberty and a denial of the constitutional right of the individual to "worship God according to the dictates of his conscience." The latest state decision was handed down on June 27, 1929, by the Supreme Court of South Dakota; the text, with two dissenting opinions, may be found on page 348 of volume 226 of the Northwestern Reporter.

Marvin Finger was a pupil in the public schools of Meade County during the month of February, 1925, at which time the school board of Faith School District, the competent authority, directed that the Bible be read or the Lord's Prayer recited, without sectarian comment, in all schoolrooms wherein public school was being conducted. Protest was made by certain of the Catholic pupils, and for a short period thereafter they were excused from attendance. Some disarrangement seems to have followed this exemption, whereupon the board instructed the superintendent to see to it that no child missed either Scripture reading or opening exercises in the morning. That order was enforced, and young Finger was summarily expelled and informed that he would not be taken back unless he signed a written apology and promised to "willingly and cheerfully comply" with the school board's regulations.

His father sought, by an action of mandamus, to compel the school board to readmit young Marvin and thereafter excuse him from attendance at what the father called religious services. The sought-for relief was denied by the Meade County Court. On appeal, the State Supreme Court, by a three to two vote, reversed this decision, in consequence annulling section 7659 of the State Code, which provided that the Bible might be read, without sectarian comment, in the state schools.

Justice Burch, who read the decision, sagely notes the difficulty in such cases of securing a judicial determination because of the personal beliefs and prejudices of the deciding judges, and consequently begins his opinion with a brief historical outline showing that the men who settled America came to this new land to escape persecution for their religious beliefs. That fact was responsible for the guarantees which appear in the federal constitution and have been copied into the constitution and laws of each of the states. Those men knew the dire consequence of state interference with the church. They knew that religion cannot be enforced by law, that it must result from, and only from, stern and honest conviction.

The legitimate function of the public school, said the Court, is to impart secular knowledge. Under our system of government, religious teaching is confided to individuals and organizations not supported by the state, who may use religious books with no restriction on the comments that may be made. Obviously the limitation of comment indicates intent to trespass on forbidden or dangerous ground and to undertake in some degree religious instruction, even though tenets of no particular sect are to be endorsed and expounded. The opinion shows that constitutional restrictions were not laid to protect Christianity from other forms of belief, but rather to prevent disputes between what the Court called "sects of the national religion."

For if, they declared, disputes arise from controversies between Christians, and not between Christians and others, it is because this is a Christian nation; so that, while the reading of the Koran, for example, would not be an act of religion, the reading of the Bible or the recitation of the Lord's Prayer are bound to be reverenced for their religious implications. And a Louisiana court, dealing with a similar problem, declared that selections from the Bible are read and taught as the inspired word of God, and God, as the Author of the book, is consequently worshiped in such reading. And while Justice Burch declared his belief that the peace and safety of the state would be enhanced by the teaching of morality and wholesome beliefs, he added: "It does not follow that a reading of the King James version is essential to such instruction." It was that version which was read in the South Dakota school, and while the school board frankly agreed that the reading of any other version would accomplish the same desired purpose, the Justice added that the difficulty lay in the selection of the particular version and the persons to whom the selection should be read by the teacher. Besides,

> It is not necessary for the teaching of religion to youth that it be taught in the public schools, for we have many churches whose function it is to teach religion.

A great difficulty was the determination of whether or not the King James version was in fact "sectarian," though the Court took judicial notice of the fact that it is a version acceptable to Protestants but not to Catholics, and that Protestants use all versions as substantially the same, excepting only the Douay, which is exclusively Catholic. This Douay text sanctions certain dogmas and practices of the Catholic Church which are denounced by Protestants; and if, said the Court, that aversion is well founded, that in itself is sufficient evidence of substantial difference between the two. The Court points out many variations, and remarks that while the differences

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> may seem unsubstantial, to many they are sufficiently serious to engender heated controversy. It is shown that the King James version was a translation by Anglican scholars bitterly opposed to Catholics, since in the dedication of the text the head of the Catholic Church is characterized as "the man of sin";

and the translators hold themselves to be likely to be traduced "by popish persons seeking to keep the world in ignorance and darkness." We are satisfied, said the Court,

> that neither evidence nor reason will justify us in sustaining the trial court in finding that the differences in the two versions, for a religious purpose, are not substantial.

An undoubted premise, the opinion continues, is that Bible reading and prayer are devotional and a form of religious instruction and, as such, not properly part of any secular curriculum. If indeed, as some good people say, exclusion of those things will make the public schools godless, surely the same argument affirms that their inclusion makes the schools religious. Such things may not trouble the conscience of a young child with no firm convictions, but parents may feel it their duty to protect the child from heresy and so, in keeping it from the public school, may deprive it of any instruction at all. If the child is immature, it is the parents' liberty of conscience and not that of the child which must be the controlling factor.

A Bible-reading case was up in Minnesota in 1927 and, again by a divided court, such reading was there sustained. A strong dissent, however, was entered by Chief Justice Wilson, who asked whether Catholics would be satisfied with a reading which ignored the existence of purgatory, or the Protestants with one establishing such a place as is indicated in the Book of Maccabees, and whether either reading would not interfere with someone's religious beliefs and rights. Use of Bible reading, he held, was felt by Catholics to be a repudiation of their own Church and an endorsement of Protestantism, which was not the sort of "religious liberty" contemplated by the constitution. The feeling of Catholics that Bible reading is a sort of Evangelical religion is, he said, not without some foundation.

In Colorado (Vollmar vs. Stanley, 81 Colo. 276) the Court overturned a law requiring Bible reading, though it added that no rights would be infringed if unwilling pupils were excused from attendance at those periods. In Louisiana (Herold vs. Parish Board, 136 La. 1034) the holding was that, as between Christians and Jews, there was a clear infringement, but that no discrimination could be found between Christians, since the Court would not concern itself with "alleged errors in differing translations." Kentucky followed the Colorado course (Hackett vs. Graded School, 120 Ky. 608) basing the decision on the question of the sectarianism of the Bible—King James version—and the Lord's Prayer, and ignoring the question as to whether such reading and recitation affected broad religious liberty. In Nebraska (Freeman vs. Scheve, 65 Neb. 876) Bible reading was declared to be worship and sectarian instruction, and hence prohibited. Similar conclusions have been reached in Wisconsin (Weiss vs. School Board, 76 Wis. 177) and Justice Burch remarked that if the wearing of a religious habit constituted such instruction, as New York courts have held, certainly the selection of a disputed translation would seem a preference for the group holding to that translation as a great aid in inculcating and perpetuating their characteristic doctrines.

The answer filed by the school board to Mr. Finger's complaint seems to have especially impressed and influenced the South Dakota Court, for they term it a striking illustration of the bitterness and rancor that can and does arise from disputes between religious denominations.

To sum up, they hold that the state as an educator must keep out of the religious field, especially in common schools where children are immature and the liberty of conscience of parents rather than of children must control. The children in the Meade County case, they said, were not otherwise deprived of religious instruction, and no doctrine of necessity could in any wise be invoked. And finally the South Dakota judgment declared:

> The case involves the right of Protestants to read their translation of the Bible and to conduct their form of worship in the common schools, and to compel Catholic children to attend on such services over parental objection. On the broad ground of infringement of religious liberty we must hold such action unlawful.

Ombres Chinoises

You send in pity four new books
And ask me how the country looks?

Secret, this morning. Golden eyes
Mongolian, tilted, narrow . . . and their
Beauty affirms . . . or half denies . . .
Leaf-shaped, that slow oblivious stare!
This happened very long ago
They seem to say: but what? I know
A pageant or a ritual
Is indicated by such trees,
But if the elm could quote Li Po,
Should I see what it sees?

Or shall I say, the centuries
Like goldfinches exceeding small
Have settled down out of the air,
A vast migration, tending where?
I feel them take my breath like these
Leaves, like this glitter! And they flow
Forward and backward like despair.
. . . . Not easy to explain, at all!
But haven't you known a road to run
Two ways at once out of the sun?

GRACE HAZARD CONKLING.

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OLD MICHAEL

By L. A. G. STRONG

OLD MICHAEL passed the back of his hand across his dry mouth, and looked northward with contracted brows to the estuary. At his feet a long line lay coiled in a tray. He was passing it through his great blackened hands, disentangling the loose snoods, clearing the hooks of stale bait, and every now and then straightening out a knot or a muddle: but he did it all mechanically, his mind hunting for a fresh pretext that could take him to the village which lay behind the short humpy headland. He could last a week without going there, but no longer.

He was a handsome old fellow, or the remains of one. In the winter, when he worked as a casual laborer, he could get to the village as often as he liked, and would give himself up altogether to drink when the craving took him. His face would be all scarred with falls on the stony road. But in summertime he was attached as gillie and fisherman to one of the lodges on the big estate, and the gentry who rented it for their holiday took his services with the house. He was given his meals and twenty-five shillings a week, but his own cottage stood over a mile away, and by the time he had eaten his supper he was too tired to go all the extra way into the village. Moreover, he had to be back at the big house early, in time to draw the water, clean the boots, chop wood, and carry coal. So that it became necessary to think of reasons for visiting the village: a task made no easier by the fact that his employers generally got wind of his purposes, and did not sympathize.

Last week he had hit on a fine excuse. The recollection of it kindled his eye for a moment. He had appeared, cap in hand, in the open door of the drawing-room where his employer's wife sat sewing.

"I get a fright, Mrs. Hilton," he exclaimed dramatically.

"Good gracious, Michael!" exclaimed the startled lady. "Whatever *is* the matter?"

He bent his sad blue eyes upon her, wrinkling his brow in the effort to make himself understood.

"Boat. Rope. Rope. No good. Rotten."

He looked at her solemnly, and his eyes clouded: his voice trailed off. "I get a fright," he repeated: and his face at once lost all expression, and became remote and impersonal as a rock. It was a wonderful gift, his power of withdrawing himself from human affairs. It lent his face a kind of melancholy majesty, and, with his small supply of English, enabled him to avoid officially understanding any orders which he did not like. Indeed, no visitor could be sure, from the look of him, how much or how little old Michael understood. Actually he had much more English than he pretended, but his speech was always slow and laborious, for whenever it was necessary to explain something to the gentry he had to translate from his native Gaelic, searching the recesses of his memory: preferring usually to begin with a noun or so, and supplement them with verbs as soon as they had impressed themselves upon his hearer.

"Rope? What rope? What is the matter with it?"

Mournful as a great ape's, his eyes came back to her. He *was* rather like an ape, she reflected, with his long arms bowed outward, and his little sad eyes set close in his head.

"Rope. At the boat. She is—"

Michael wrinkled his brow, and gave up the effort to say what she was. "Rope—rotten," he repeated. "Wind: bigger and bigger." He glanced out of the window. "I get a fright." The sound of his voice died away, like the sound of a wave falling back from the beach.

Mrs. Hilton bit her lip, and looked out at the sea. It was coming dark from the northwest, and curling into plumed white horses. That wind was certainly rising. She hesitated.

"What do you want to do about it?' she asked. Then, as the answer seemed too obvious, "Where could you get a new rope?"

Michael cast his eyes up to the ceiling, as if in thought. "I getting one in Achraig," he said at last, "or in the village." He pronounced the last syllable soft, like spinach.

Mrs. Hilton cleared her throat. "You'd better go to Achraig, then," she said, with assumed determination. "You'd get a bigger choice, wouldn't you?"

"Achraig, och, aye."

Just as good a drink, but further to go. Longer time allowed, therefore. The thoughts flitted across his brain like a breeze over a pool, but his face was expressionless. He opened his mouth slowly, as if to say something of great importance.

"I getting rope—at Achraig."

"Very well, then, Michael."

And the lady returned to her sewing, feeling that she had kept up appearances well. Michael stood there, eyed her, murmured, "Aye, Achraig," in such a tone as he might use to comfort a child; and shambled out.

But that was a week ago. The new rope had been bought, twenty fathoms of it, and was neatly coiled in the boat's bow. A new pretext was necessary, and none offered.

Michael grunted, and looked up, to see his present employer advancing toward him with brisk and purposeful step. It would be hard to say which of the old man's features moved, but a change came over his face, comparable only to the change of light on the face of a rock.

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Piers Hilton was a colonial administrator of some consequence; a well-groomed, personable man in the early forties, with a fresh complexion, a clipped moustache and an efficient, authoritative manner which covered vital indecision of character. This indecision had been plain to Michael in the first minute of their meeting; as a result, Hilton was secretly afraid of him.

"Good morning, Michael."

"Mornin', sir."

There was all respect in the voice and the finger lifted to the old yachting cap. None of His Majesty's servants could ask for more. After a quick glance, Piers avoided the old man's eye.

"Oh, Michael, we were thinking of going on a picnic above the Falls. All of us."

"Above the Falls. Aye, sir."

"We are going on ahead in the car, and I want you to bring the maids round by boat, and land them by the rocks, if you will be so good; and then come on and make the fire for us. And row the maids back again, when it's all over."

A whole reasoned plan flickered behind the old man's eyes like a flash of summer lightning, but his face remained inscrutable.

"Och aye, sir."

Piers hesitated, and then turned away abruptly. He hated to conclude any interview without producing an obvious effect upon the person interviewed. The old man watched him walking jerkily away, with shoulders squared and arms swinging self-consciously: and returned to his line. Row the maids round. So much the better, since he did not like the maids. Pert cockney girls, strangers to the country and all its ways. He despised them, anyhow, but they had given him grounds for a more personal resentment by exclaiming against his old jersey and his trousers, all over fish scales, and refusing to have him sit at the same table with them.

The maids came across the sandhills carrying tea-baskets. The two heaviest baskets Michael had brought down already and stowed under the stern seats of the boat. High affected voices reached him suddenly, and he looked up. Grasping the sides of the boat, he swung himself round with an ape-like agility, unfastened the lines, and backed the boat in.

Straightening up, he silently offered his hand to the first girl. She hesitated, giggled and took it, jumping in awkwardly and rocking the boat. Grimly he handed her to a place. Two others jumped in after her, but before the cook could follow he had grasped the oars, and was maneuvering the boat around.

"Here," she cried in offended tones, "what about me?"

"In the bows."

"I'd rather sit with the others, thanks *very* much."

She stood, loud and overblown, clasping her skirt. He looked down, hiding his dislike of her.

"Betta in bows," he repeated. "More safe."

Mrs. Thompson hesitated, made a grimace and scrambled into the bow, commenting audibly on the contrariness of some old men. Without a sign, Michael bent his back and began to row. The water was pleasant, and as the rocks slid by and gave place to stretches of white sand, crowned with reeds, above which sloped a range of rounded hills ending in the rocky splendor of great Craig Colman, Michael's passengers were soon in high good humor.

He pulled steadily along. Soon they were near the mouth of the river, and he allowed himself a glance over his shoulder to make sure that his calculations were laid aright. The river, carrying even in August a great weight of water, ran out westward between steep sandy banks to the sea. Its mouth had an average width of 400 yards, and at certain tides the passage could be very tricky. The bar was shallow, and any kind of rough weather usually managed to shift a great deal of sand, so that the bottom would often be silted up into a bank, where yesterday there had been twelve feet of clear water. The tide had just turned, and, encouraged by a slight breeze, was noisily disputing right of entry with the descending current. A bobbing, jobbling line of water, dotted with spume and small debris, marked the first engagement of the opposed forces. Inside this, there stretched on the right a wide, innocuous shallow, normal passage for a rowboat: while the main current, visible from above as a streak of deep, wicked green, slewed powerfully round the edge of this sandbank, and shot out into the river mouth at an angle. A boat driven resolutely against this main current could, if badly trimmed, bounce up and down quite briskly for a hundred yards or so, and even ship a tidy bucketful of water. Michael, his face more like granite than ever, avoided the safe sandbank and pulled for the troubled waters.

The cook, who looked up indignantly at the first jobble where the currents met, had settled comfortably back again. She was reclining, trailing a fat hand in the water, when the boat bucked and hit her hard in the small of the back. Before she could protest she was bumped again, three or four times, with a terrifying crash of water under the bows: and Michael, with a sudden deliberate jerk of the oars, managed to ship a hearty lapful of water each for the party in the stern.

"Sit still! Sit still!" he yelled, and bent back, straining at the oars, his eyes shut, his teeth bared in a jagged tobacco-stained line. With a series of terrific jerks he bashed the boat's head against the waves, sending the hapless Mrs. Thompson flying up and down like a melon in a basket. Swerving first to one side, then to the other, he contrived to make such rough weather of it as surprised even himself, and once all but tipped him off the thwart. Screams rang in his ears like music, but his passengers had soon no breath left, and their gasps were drowned in the outrageous smacking and slapping of the waves against the bow. Then, with astonishing suddenness, they were in calm water, and the old man rested on his oars.

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"Och, och, och," he exclaimed, with wide-open innocent eyes. "Terrible dangerous water. I get fright, Mrs. Thomp-son. I get fright."

The picnic went off after the manner of its kind. The maids sat in a self-conscious little group a few yards away, scrambling up every now and then to wait upon their betters, and Michael, indifferent to both groups, bent over the fire and handled red-hot sticks with apparent impunity. When the time came to return, the maids with one voice refused to go back in the boat, declaring that they would far rather walk.

"Very well, then, Michael," said Piers at last, without looking at him. "You had better take the boat back by yourself."

"Very good, sir," the old man assented gravely. "Later on. Tide: rough now."

Two hours later, Michael sat in the bar, bemused. Leaning his chin forward and looking up toward the ceiling, he thought of his past glories. Of the day when, a boy of eleven, he had parleyed with the excisemen and turned them away, a bare ten yards from the cave where his grandfather lay hidden with his still. Of hazardous journeys, rowing on impossible nights from the islands to the mainland and back again, with the produce of that same still and of many another, which they sold at a bare eighteenpence a bottle. Good stuff, good stuff, the soul of honey and fire! There was not the like of it to be had now for any money. Most of the gentry, yes, and two magistrates, used to buy it from him on the quiet. His father and grandfather ran the business between them.

That way of life had lasted till he was nearly twenty. Then his grandfather had died of a chill caught on a raw wet February night, and the same summer his father poisoned his hand on a rusty nail and was dead within the week. Michael was out in the world, with nothing but his health and his muscles. In his perplexity he went to one of the firm's patrons, and was taken on as assistant fisherman and handy man. Since then he had made all his living by the sea. A wonderful craft it was that he had learned in the years of his apprenticeship, till it came to be said of him that he could coax a fish from the sea by crooking his finger. The fact was that he had turned to his new trade a brain sharpened by the hazards of the old, and won quick preëminence among fishermen who worked lazily by tradition. As he sat now, brooding over his glass in a melancholy ecstasy, there was rotting in his brain an exact science, a delicate animal sympathy with the ways of fish, which could rival any civilized man's knowledge of his profession. There was not a detail in all his life, of tide and bait and local peculiarity, that he had not noted and docketed and remembered, to be fetched out of its place maybe twenty years later, used with profit and put back again. He could remember the weather of every season, and give the year and month. He knew every lobster-hole in sixteen miles of coast. And he noted it all subconsciously, instinctively, by the reflex action of a mind which from infancy had learned to be wary and cunning as a wild animal's.

As he sat, the mind of the old man grew sad and proud. His strength, his wonderful strength! Was he not called Michael Strong to this day, always, everywhere, so that half the neighbors even had forgotten his real name?

"Good day to ye, Strong."

"More power there, Strong."

"There goes old Strong."

Ah, those who knew him in the old days knew what a man he was.

It was raining, and almost dark, when Michael went staggering down the rocks to the place where he had moored the boat. Once on board he would be all right: for the specialized faculty of rowing back did not depend upon his consciousness. Muscle plus instinct could perform it automatically. Besides, he was not going to row all the way back to the big house.

Below his cottage there had appeared, one winter after a storm, a tiny bay in the soft sand of the bank. Quick to see its possible advantages, Michael had worked hard for a whole morning with his spade: and there was now a sandy inlet some eight feet deep in the bank, holding at high tide a good four feet of quiet water. It was half an hour beyond high tide tonight, and it would be high tide at nine the next morning: which meant that by half-past seven Michael Strong would have no difficulty in sliding the boat into the water and getting round to the big house in time.

He fell several times on his way to the boat. Slithered would be a better word, for all his muscles were loose, and he laughed and sang with amusement whenever he found himself in a position unforeseen a moment before. A wet leg just before he reached the boat was his worst accident. He had moored her cunningly, and once he fell aboard it did not take him more than three times as long as usual to get away. All the time he sang to himself in the gathering darkness, for his spirit was full of triumph: triumph over the maids, over his jumped-up employers, and over circumstance. Triumph for the success of his plan.

Crok-crok, crok-crok. Regular and certain the rowlocks sounded over the still estuary, though the boat was invisible in mist and darkness: belying with their methodical precision the drunken song which quavered in fragments along with them. Crok-crok, crok-crok.

It was instinct rather than sight that made Michael suddenly give three mighty jerks with his left oar, and head diagonally toward the bank, cutting across the steady current and adding a new lap-lap-lapping sound to the noises he had been making. A glance over his shoulder—farther down—farther down—Now!

The boat shot forward, and her nose stuck with a soft full *thuck* upon the sand, tipping Michael over backward. She was fast for the night.

Five minutes later he had blundered into his dark cottage and fallen upon the bed. For another week his problem would not trouble him.

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JOHN DEWEY AND EDUCATION

By HELEN M. McCADDEN

THE secular newspapers of New York, especially the Sunday editions, have been giving great publicity to the seventieth birthday of Professor John Dewey, whose name is found in the histories of education as well as in the books on modern philosophy. Professor Dewey's colleagues at Columbia University have also paid signal heed to his anniversary, by means of two intellectual feasts at Horace Mann Auditorium and an honest-to-goodness dinner at a prominent hotel. At the first two of these gatherings the works of John Dewey as a philosopher and as an educator were rehearsed, by men famous in the American thinking world, with an enthusiasm fully equal to the auspiciousness of the occasion.

Although the hero of the speakers' songs was indeed a man who had attained a wide and deserved popularity, it might well have seemed to their less inspired listeners that the lenses of their perception were marred by sections of opaqueness. By the minimizing or neglecting of certain past facts the glory of the man of the hour was made the greater by the men chosen to eulogize him.

On the evening devoted to Professor Dewey's contributions to education, it was boldly stated by a leading western educator that there had been no educational philosopher from Socrates and Plato to Locke, Herbart and Dewey. Aristotle, because his ideas on education were more immediately practicable and less idealistic than those of the Socratic myth and the Republic of Plato, was denied the name of philosopher, at least in the educational field. The first thirteen centuries of the Christian era, in spite of such educators as Saint Augustine, Abelard, Saint Thomas and others, were passed over as negligible, presumably because the teachers of that period adhered to the more concrete teachings and more thorough methods of Aristotle, and adapted the more purely philosophic notions of Plato to their own system of the universe. The renaissance, although its Erasmus and its More were given no honor, was at least credited with a recrudescence of interest in education, responsible for the reëmergence of the genus "educational philosopher" in the form, for example, of Locke and Herbart and John Dewey.

There are several points in this panorama of educational philosophy that show that the camera was out of focus. What the term "educational philosopher" should be taken to signify is a mystery. If it designates a man who has written a book with sound educational theories, the omission of tens of other names is inexplicable, and the inclusion of a man like Socrates is to be explained only because it makes the company more illustrious. If, moreover, the term be extended to designate any person who has held original and generally applicable educational ideas, it should certainly include also the persons who evolved and established the mediaeval system of training the young—the most workable educational system that we have record of.

In the centuries preceding the renaissance, the dominant ideal in education was to train every person to fit somewhere in the industrial and social structure. There were no laws compelling every child to study composition, algebra, Latin and philosophy until he was grown to maturity. Instead, every child was trained, from the dawning of his reason, in the knowledge and skill that would stand him in good stead in his adult life. From page to squire and then to knight, from apprentice to journeyman and then to master, or from school-child to student and then to teacher, the child passed to his goal in steady stages of useful education. The grown man, trained to his tasks and his place in life by a class system that came close to the Platonic ideal, was not superior to the ordinary work of life and not threatened by the bugaboo of unemployment that haunts the semi-useless. There was little waste in education under this régime.

It is the renaissance, with its revival of the classics and its emphasis on book-learning and on wide curiosity, that has been justly credited as a first manifestation of the movement toward wider education along bookish and cultural lines. Salutary as the universalizing of the power to read, write and compute undoubtedly has been, it has dragged in after it, in the last event, an insistence that all children stay in school long past the time when most of them can profit by further purely intellectual tasks, and a long-pervading formalism in the education of the many that has produced countless thousands who are too normal in brain power to use in their lives the Euclidean geometry they have been taught, and too untrained in more useful arts and in taking care of themselves to find a place in the adult world.

The attack led by Professor Dewey was against this stiffness and impracticability of compulsory universal education. "Make the subject real to the child" is the watch-word hung before the modern teacher, and interpreted, if the teacher is sensible, to man, "Teach only those parts of the subject that will make the child better equipped for life." A professor's recent advice to college students to "make high-powered rifles of their minds instead of waste-baskets," which is fast becoming proverbial, is quoted as being the keynote of Dewey's contribution to education. This rings strangely like advice to return to the system of purposeful learning used many centuries ago, with modifications, of course, to meet an industrially far more complex society.

The unique educational achievement of Professor Dewey, we are told at his seventieth birthday celebration, was to see the following four great principles:

1. That the school must develop the child's abilities;
2. That education is the process of experiencing, toward which the school must provide problems as a stimulus for thinking;
3. That interest and effort are secured by identifying objects of learning with the growth of the child;
4. That the school is a social institution.

It is interesting to note that in the much-scorned times when the school was the shop of the master, the court of the lord, or the library of the monastery, and before the renaissance "reawakened" the world, these principles were actually in practice, although there were no educational philosophers now accredited as such to formulate them. In the above principles at least, John Dewey seems to have uncovered long-buried truths and to have led the movement to apply them to modern education according to the needs of our civilization.

Age

Yesterday I was young
But my lover said,
"Time changes and love ranges
And our old love is dead."

Now I'm so old that God
With woodsman art
Counts the rings, the years
Of pain in my heart.

JAMES LEWIS HAYS.

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COMMUNICATIONS

IN DEFENSE OF BLAKE

Williamstown, Mass.

TO the Editor:—Proust and Blake! how surprised he would be. Poor and harassed and often hungry, able to exist through the constant care of an uneducated wife—that is, in books, but intelligent, sympathetic and with that all-too-rare perceptive insight.

In the effort to give him belated praise (or is it high-pressure best-selling characterization?) let us hope an entirely new Blake won't be offered for popular consumption. He offered no philosophy but he was a mystic, a poet and an artist; he sought to understand a world of which he had not the slightest practical conception. He sought to express what was a chaotic, but not necessarily abnormal mind (this point must be left to another school of dissectors).

He did write as Mr. Van Winkle says, "heaven-sent lyrics," and if possessed of that elusive and yet very tangible poetic faculty, the images intended by Blake will form themselves; and after all, a creator asks for little else. Blake sought to express, and as beautifully as possible, that which was within himself and which he longed to put into form. Even an anti-Croce will admit this truism.

In addition to his poetry, a casual study of his line, his color and his sense of decoration and arrangement will transport one to another world. It is said he worked without models and could recall a complete composition at will. His visions and exaltations were attributes of his own original mind. He was completely detached and that in itself is of importance in trying to understand the man.

Blake was not trying to prove anything, to explain anything, but he did seek to put into shape dreams, visions, longings, all that was part and essence of the man.

If ever the word personality can be meaningly applied, it is to Blake. A Poison Tree written when he was about to leave a friend entirely lacking in understanding of him, contains a world of thought.

MARY ROOD.

A KANSAS JUDGE

Brooklyn, N. Y.

TO the Editor:—At the beginning of his term of office, Attorney-general Mitchell announced that only qualified men would be appointed as federal judges. President Hoover approved this declaration.

Six months ago, a paid lecturer of the Anti-saloon League was endorsed by the Anti-saloon League and the two senators from Kansas for appointment as federal judge in that state. The Attorney-general opposed the appointment because the proposed appointee was not qualified. The President sustained Mr. Mitchell's objection.

After six months of bickering, Mr. Hoover and Mr. Mitchell have surrendered. The unqualified man gets the appointment. Is the federal judiciary to be packed with unqualified men simply because they have the backing of that insidious lobby—the Anti-saloon League?

Mr. Hoover expressed amazement not so long ago at the contempt for laws and courts that exists in the nation. Will this appointment lessen that contempt?

HOWARD W. TONER.

UNIONIZING THE FAITHFUL

Esopus, N. Y.

TO the Editor:—It is a pity that your correspondent from Maryknoll did not cite some reference to Saint Augustine's works to prove his statement that "the maxim attributed to Saint Paul"—by the author of Unionizing the Faithful—"was not formulated by the great Apostle, but Saint Augustine, and reads as follows: 'In necessariis unitas, in dubiis libertas, in omnibus charitas.'" I wonder if he can!

I wonder again if he ever came across the footnote in the learned Father Henry Denifle's Luther and Luthertum (Mainz, 1904; second edition, volume 1, page 423) where it is asserted (1) that the attributing of this maxim to Saint Augustine is without foundation ("grundlos"); (2) that the author is unknown (some say Melanchthon, some Gregory Frank, and others the enigmatical Meldenius); (3) that it became a proverbial expression only after 1630; and (4) that it seems to have been coined for the purpose of promoting indifferentism and latitudinarianism.

SACERDOS.

THE NEGRO'S PLACE IN THE SUN

Louisville, Ky.

TO the Editor:—The Negro's Place in the Sun, which appeared in one of your recent issues, was very interesting as well as timely.

I have been a vice-president of the Interracial Commission you mentioned therein since 1920, and while a great many activities have engaged my attention, I have found that it is not only a pleasant but a most interesting experience to promote better relations between the races. Furthermore, it is possible to get coöperation from both the white and colored groups to a much greater extent than was my experience with the religious groups.

At the Interracial Conventions at Washington and Cincinnati I am very sorry to say I was the only Catholic associated in this work. However, the lack of coöperation by Catholics in matters of this kind is proverbial.

P. H. CALLAHAN.

REFLECTION UPON ART

Berkeley, Cal.

TO the Editor:—In my recent communication regarding art, published in the October 23 number of The Commonweal, there was a mistake in my copy which might lead to confusion. In regard to the Irish situation, the letter read to the effect that the Republicans were refusing the sacraments. It should read to the effect that they were refused the sacraments, if they did not promise to give up their activities.

JOHN EMMETT GERRITY.

THE DEARTH OF RELIGIOUS CARDS

Newark, N. J.

TO the Editor:—In your issue of October 23, Anne Squire "would like to hear from some of your readers" on the subject of religious Christmas cards. If she will communicate with the Franciscan Monastery, Paterson, New Jersey, or the Franciscans of Graymoor, Garrison, New York, she can obtain for $1.00 a dozen of strikingly pretty cards.

AGNES G. GARRIGAN.

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THE PLAY

By RICHARD DANA SKINNER

IT RARELY happens that one playwright has three plays running on Broadway at the same time. It has, in the past, happened to O'Neill, to Shakespeare and to Ibsen—possibly to a few others as well. In the case of modern writers, such an occurrence is generally due to a mixture of revivals and new plays. But in the case of Martin Flavin—manufacturer turned playwright—it is happening today with three new plays. The Criminal Code, Broken Dishes and Cross-Roads are all new products of his active pen, presenting, as between themselves, abrupt and striking contrasts.

The Criminal Code

MARTIN FLAVIN'S first bow to New York was through a serious and mordant play called Children of the Moon. It did not score a commercial success, but has remained deeply engraved on the minds of steady theatregoers as a work of considerable distinction. It dealt with the power of a selfish mother to distort the minds of those about her. The Criminal Code is quite understandable as a successor to Children of the Moon—utterly different in theme but displaying the same qualities of mind of the author. It is a play dealing with mental states and the distortions wrought through environment.

If you happen to have seen, many years ago, Galsworthy's play called Justice, you will have a good general impression of the type of play to which The Criminal Code belongs. It jumps right into the middle of that vicious circle surrounding the criminal mind, and interprets the circle to you in terms of a young man wrongly convicted of second-degree murder. A prologue in the district attorney's office gives the first tragic premise—a lonely boy who defends a street walker from insults and in doing so accidentally kills the scion of a rich family. Robert Graham has nothing of the criminal in him—nothing, that is, beyond the normal human mixture of good and bad, with the bad under reasonably safe control. A good criminal lawyer could have secured a prompt acquittal. But Graham's employers lend him the services of their business attorney, a man as unfamiliar with criminal practice as a new-born babe. Martin Brady, the district attorney, faced by an approaching election, sets out to get, and does get, a conviction. Several years later, Brady is made warden of the state's prison where Graham is still serving his term. It is at this point that drama begins to stalk the stage.

Mr. Flavin has used many devices to heighten the points of his story—an interesting prison doctor to interpret Graham to us, Brady's daughter to warm the stone-grey prison into a place for romance, and a series of well-drawn cross-section types within the walls, men who prey upon Graham's imagination in one way or another as the heavy years roll by. Drama quickly deepens into melodrama when the criminal code dictates that one of the inmates, a squealer, shall pay for his cowardice with his life. Graham has the bad luck to know who did the killing. He is offered every inducement to tell, but, bound himself by the code of loyalty within the walls, remains silent. He is put in the dungeon and tortured. He does not know that the warden has his parole ready, nor that Brady, moved at last by the discovery that his daughter is in love with Graham (who has acted as the family chauffeur) is ready to forego forcing a confession. Crazed by hunger, torture and the phantoms conjured in his brain through long years, Graham murders the man who has tortured him, not knowing that this same man has now come to set him free. The irony of the "bad break." Too late. Like the tolling of an old cracked bell—too late, too late.

It is a play that holds and fascinates with grim determination. It is a play abounding with pity, understanding and a fine indignation at the rigidity of human legal codes, at the clanking, crushing machinery of the law driven by the unselfish actions of small-minded men. But it is not, in spite of all this, a great play. It has too many glaring defects, especially as seen in retrospect. The "bad breaks" are too often of the author's own making—happenings that are not really inherent in any of the situations. At other times, sheer coincidence plays too big a part. And in the final episodes, it is always painfully evident that Robert's confession is not the only way in which the prison murderer might be brought to justice. The warden, already somewhat conscience-stricken at the part he played earlier in Robert's life, would, one feels, have exhausted all the detective talents of the state before throwing the boy in the dungeon or trying to make him turn traitor to his fellow-prisoners. No real effort is ever made to discover the identity of the murderer except through Robert. In other words, one feels that Mr. Flavin saw his ending before he began his play, and allowed nothing to stand in its way. The play thus suffers badly from forced situations, and also from patent theatricality.

Albert R. Johnson's settings for this play deserve special mention. By the use of a grey curtain and a half a dozen other well-chosen devices, he does as much through scenery to heighten the dismal gloom as the story of the play itself. Arthur Byron as Martin Brady, district attorney and later warden, gives one of those amazingly natural performances which establish him in a special niche among character actors. Anita Kerry as his daughter, Ethel Griffies as his nervous sister, William Franklin as the squealer and Walter Kingsford as the doctor all contribute bits of rarely restrained and affective work. There is not a bad piece of casting in the play, and William Harris, producer, contributes also an excellent example of stage direction. (At the National Theatre.)

Broken Dishes

YOU might have expected George Kelly, in an hilarious moment, to have written Broken Dishes. You would never have suspected Martin Flavin as its author—not, at least, after Children of the Moon and The Criminal Code. Therefore, let it be said at once that in writing this delicious and generally side-splitting comedy, Mr. Flavin has earned the right to be known as one of our most versatile authors.

One almost hates to breathe the truth and to admit that Broken Dishes is another play about a henpecked husband in a house of women. Not only that, but another play in which liquor turns the timid soul into a momentary tyrant and saves the day. Yes—it can't be denied. But one must then hurry, in the very same breath, to explain that it doesn't make a bit of difference whether the plot is as old as Nineveh, or the characters as familiar as the morning ash-can dumper, or the situations as far-fetched as a Molière farce. The point is that Mr. Flavin has rewritten all the old stuff so well, deep-

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ened the etching of his characters so acutely, and, for two acts at least, maintained his suspense so delightfully, that the whole affair is as fresh as morning dew—which has had the habit of being fresh every morning for thousands of years.

Of course Donald Meek has something to do with all this. Cyrus Bumpsted may be, as a program note says, his eight hundred and eightieth rôle, or something like that. If so, at least eight hundred of those rôles have had something to do with being henpecked and lovable. No man's surname was ever more prophetic of the place he was to occupy on the American stage than that of Donald Meek. But the point is that he plays such parts superlatively well. He never lets his character degenerate into farce outlines. He maintains at all times a rich humanity which, at a moment's notice, can turn your loudest laughter into a lumpy throat. His work as Cyrus Bumpsted is something which does more than bring praise. It stirs positive enthusiasm.

The play in general is put together with exceptional skill. A subtle suspense pervades the second act which induces an almost hysterical laughter in the audience, and which makes you want to take an immediate hand in affairs to help straighten them out. Small bits of characterization are added to the familiar types which make them stand forth as individuals. It is only in the last act that Mr. Flavin's power of inventive detail seems to slacken, and with it something of the illusion of the play. Pure coincidence steps in for the first time and the ultimate solution of the difficulties becomes somewhat artificial. An excellent cast gives Donald Meek joyous support, with Bette Davis conspicuous in a winning and lovely performance as the Cinderella daughter.

Judging from the contrast between this and Mr. Flavin's serious plays, the difference between his authorship and that of George Kelly is this: that Kelly has been progressively unsuccessful in his more serious efforts, whereas Flavin, starting with some distinction in serious work, has shown a deft hand in character comedy. Flavin is more nearly comparable, in promise at least, with the best of Sidney Howard's work, and certainly, in Children of the Moon, he touched, and with quivering force, one of those themes we associate chiefly with O'Neill. (At the Ritz Theatre.)

Cross-Roads

IN HIS third play of the season, Mr. Flavin has let us down with a bump. Staged by none other than Guthrie McClintic, and supported with stage settings designed by Robert Edmond Jones, Cross-Roads is just one of those theatre happenings that leaves you a trifle embarrassed for the author. It has too many good moments to be discarded as sheer rubbish, and yet, in many long stretches and throughout many highly artificial situations, it is so inept and bungling that you wonder how it ever came to actual production.

The theme is all about students at a co-educational college, and centers chiefly around their overnight parties at road houses, raids, disgrace, fatal automobile accidents and the like. Mr. Flavin's outstanding fault of subordinating everything to preconceived plot is more evident than ever, and the artificiality of most of the situations deprives them of all the significance he attempts to work in. He probably intends the play to be a serious study of the effect of machine education upon adolescence. But what he actually achieves is merely a picture of sexual irregularities aggravated by needless misunderstandings and immature ideas. There should be a charitable limbo for all such half-baked efforts by otherwise intelligent authors. (At the Morosco Theatre.)

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BOOKS

Cecil Rhodes and Others

Dreamers of Empire, by Achmed Abdullah and T. Compton Pakenham. New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company. $3.50.

THE title of this book truly suggests that empire is not primarily a bundle of statistics but a state of mind, perhaps a state of soul. Disregarding the somewhat irrelevant sketch of Walker the filibuster—picturesque but neither attractive nor deeply significant—the other five studies concern themselves with men who in their several ways helped build up the imperial power of Britain. The combination of Achmed Abdullah, the Europeanized Oriental, and Pakenham, who has spent so much of his life in the East that he might be called an orientalized Englishman, makes a strong writing team. They sometimes rail a little at people or ideas they do not like; they permit themselves flings of undiscriminating abuse of missionaries; and they pedantically spell Celtic "Keltic." But these are only little eddies which do not block the clear and sometimes brilliant flow of the narrative.

Their independence of viewpoint sometimes leads them to vary from the usual version of characters and events. Nevertheless the reviewer has definitely spotted only two trivial historical errors. It is said that the Arabs met and defeated "the steel-clad legions of Rome," and while it is true that the seventh-century Roman troops were armored, nevertheless they were not legions but mostly cavalry. Also it was against Paraguay, not Uruguay, that the three South American republics combined. Such an extremely low proportion of manifest errors commands the reviewer's faith in the authors' historical soundness.

Cecil Rhodes lives in these pages somewhat less vividly than the other empire-builders. He had grandiose ideas, "vision" of a sort, courage and a gift for winning the confidence of the blacks. On the other hand his achievement seems less lasting than is here implied. The Boers against whom he worked are today increasingly masters of South Africa, where the imperial connection means less and less. The effective possessors of that country seem likely to be either the blacks or the Dutch-speaking Afrikanders.

It is when they touch Islam and the East that the authors get into their stride. Rhodes is followed by the picturesque figure of Francis Burton, wanderer, explorer, swordsman, author, scholar, linguist, hater of Jews and friend of Moslems, who alone of Westerners succeeded in visiting Mecca in Arabic disguise. Britons have seldom found it in them to go in wholeheartedly for native ways—for instance, in the early days in America, Sir William Johnson was their only eminent squawman. This aloofness of theirs perhaps explains why their colonial history is more thickly strewn with revolts than that of the French, who have never lost a colony save by naval and military force. But Burton, although well able to assert his dignity when necessary, reveled in going native. He had his reward; Islam opened its heart to him, and this sympathy of his combined with his high intelligence and boundless appetite for study, made him a marvelous interpreter to the West of the Moslems he loved.

Now the Islamic question, as recent newspaper despatches from Palestine have reminded us, is no joke. Touching us only faintly in the distant Philippines, it touches England closely. Moreover the Mohammedan world is an interesting one. Far closer to the Faith than the Buddhist or Hindu, the Moslem has been throughout history the great enemy of

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The Pius X School of Liturgical Music, which is sponsoring a series of Lectures on Sacred Art that has so far been gratifyingly well attended, takes further pleasure in announcing the History of the Mass as the subject of the lecture for December 6 and the Altar and Vestments for December 20. The lecturer will be Reverend T. Lawrason Riggs, Chaplain of the Catholic Club, Yale University, and a member of The Commonweal Editorial Council.

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Christendom, and may be so again. Sometimes shiftless and cruel, he is almost always dignified and manly. After more than two centuries of repose, today he is moving again, and it might do us no harm to know something about him.

The three remaining chapters, on Nicholson, Henry Lawrence and Chinese Gordon have this in common, that all three were Christian gentlemen if there ever were such. Saint Louis would have been quite at home fighting side by side or sitting at wine with them. Where Burton penetrated the oriental mind by sympathetic study, the great three dominated by a high justice and a clear purity of purpose. Not that they lacked sympathy; it burnt brightly in them all. But with all three clean justice came first.

Together Nicholson and Lawrence, both having alternated throughout their Indian service between soldiering and protecting the poor from oppression, broke the great Sepoy mutiny and saved India to England. Both died before the coming of full success, but so strongly had they laid their foundations that lesser men were able to finish what they had begun.

Their deeds are a moving story. Abdullah is at no pains to whitewash the treachery and savagery of his Afghan countrymen. We see Nicholson chancing upon the dead body of his younger brother, stripped naked and mutilated. Pakenham spares us nothing of the baseness of Gladstone, sending Gordon to the Soudan and then, "with the telegram giving the fact of Gordon's imminent doom actually in his pocket," assuring the House of Commons "that the man was absolutely safe and it was unnecessary to hurry." But there is humor too; one sees Nicholson driving off with blows and curses the Nikalsaini sect of Sikhs who insisted upon worshiping him as at least a demigod! One sees Gordon scandalizing the bankers of the world, as they tighten their network of debt about the foolish Khedive of Egypt, by forgiving that unhappy monarch part of the arrears due to himself. One smiles to think of the kindly Lawrence, allowed to work a very little at the Irish problem because of his great success in winning the confidence of people then considered an equally "inferior race"—in India.

War, power and responsibility, that cruelly strip naked the littleness of little men, were garments of honor for Nicholson, for Sir Henry Lawrence, and for Chinese Gordon.

HOFFMAN NICKERSON.

Fair Yesterday

A Victorian Village, by Lizette Woodworth Reese. New York: Farrar and Rinehart. $2.50.

MISS REESE is not a performer in the three-ring literary circus on which the eyes of the major portion of our literary reviewers are fixed. Like Mr. Mencken she lives in Baltimore—and there the similarity ends. Her talent has gradually flowered out of the silences of an uneventful and modest life, but it is a talent which, in its sensitiveness and delicacy, is one of the rarest in contemporary literature. Mr. Mencken would no doubt be disinclined to grant Miss Reese the title of contemporary, for despite her German mother it is a talent which is quite frankly Victorian. And here in this charming little book of memories she most delightfully proves it. The life of Waverly and the York Road—how Victorian they are in their sound!—is not the life that Mr. Edgar Lee Masters remembered in his evocation of another village, and yet the suspicion will not down that, taken by and large, Waverly is a truer picture of an American village than is Spoon River. Perhaps Maryland is a pleasanter state to live in than

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Illinois—and Catholics may be pardoned if they take pride in knowing at least one reason why. Yet I doubt that jaundiced natures and twisted lives were the rule in the Middle-West of thirty years ago any more than they were in the more human and civilized regions around Baltimore.

The chapters headings of A Victorian Village give a hint of the sort of book it is: The Smell of Cedar, The House, Ghosts, War, The Orchard, Daddy Black and Others—no "asking forbidden questions, no pumping hidden shame!" The memories of Waverly are of a life leisurely, held in place but not stifled by tradition, a life in which the recognition of the basic virtues had not disappeared, a life in which the ultimate things were bravely acknowledged; in which, for instance, to quote Miss Reese: "Death was a solemn fact, not to be run away from, but to be faced, a cup which must be drunk down to the dregs." And Miss Reese in her writing is always the poet, tender, exquisitely feminine. A Victorian Village is informed with the melancholy of days long past, a melancholy touched with the fragile beauty of evanescent things. It is a book to be read and reread by all who are weary of a world where rest for the spirit is asserted to be out of date.

GRENVILLE VERNON.

A New Socrates

What Do We Mean by God?, by Cyril H. Valentine. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.00.

THIS is not an easy book to read in spite of the determined effort of the writer to make himself intelligible. That he champions the validity of our apprehension of objective truth, in defiance of modern tendencies, will win him a hearing from Catholic readers. He compares what is called "modern thought" with the subjectivism of the Sophists, with this difference. The Sophists delighted in the complete destruction of all objectivity, but the moderns delight only in the destruction of religious knowledge and wish to save the validity of their general knowledge of the universe. Socrates, he says, provided men with a bridge by which they could cross from the ideal to the real by enthroning the faculty of abstract reasoning. Admitting that abstract reasoning will never bring men to an adequate and satisfying knowledge of God, and wishing to avoid the necessity of Divine Revelation, with which the "modern mind" refuses to deal, the writer calls for a new Socrates who will make a bridge from the intellectual to the religious, such as the one which the old Socrates made from the sentient to the intellectual.

He modestly offers some planks for this bridge. The difficulty for those who substitute some sort of "experience" for Divine Revelation, is to prove that the "experience" is not a projection of our supposed religious needs; there is no means of testing it in relation to external reality. Where pure intellect halts may not some other "attribute" of the mind go on? Can we not admit something in man that will follow the intellect to greater heights in much the same way as the intellect follows the concrete image presented by the senses? Is it not possible to admit what may be called a "response of the whole man," which includes intellectual, volitional and emotional responses, and yet in its totality transcends them? He thinks that there is such a response.

If admitted, this response will not make religious knowledge independent of the differentiated faculties of the soul, but will, as it were, blend the responses of those faculties into a perfect harmony. In all human response to external reality the subject must act as a whole but the nature of the response will be

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distinguished by the external object. The response is intellectual when its object is truth; it is emotional when its object is artistic or imaginative; it is volitional when its object is moral goodness. The same concrete object presents opportunities for all the differentiated responses, but men will differ in the quality of their individual conclusions. The artist may not agree with the scientist, and both may differ with the moralist. In none of them are the responses divided, but they are not properly blended. In the religious response, however, there is a whole response of the whole man to that whole external reality that is God. Religious response is the personality of man acting as a whole, and this whole is more in its unity than in its analyzed parts.

Such is the substance of the argument which is worked out in detail and applied to Christian institutions with the greatest ingenuity. It seems, however, to involve a gratuitous creation of a new spiritual faculty which is above the intellect, some sort of illative sense, or religious instinct. In this respect it is by no means a new theory. Its practical dethronement of the intellect places it in opposition to Catholic philosophy and, it is hardly necessary to say, its practical elimination of the need of Divine Revelation opposes it to Catholic theology.

EDWARD HAWKS.

The Villa and the City

Up at the Villa, by Marie Cher. New York: D. Appleton and Company. $2.00.

A GENUINE and convincing atmospheric beauty pervades this story of English people in Italy, giving it a quality which sets it apart from many novels of similar theme. The conflict between the intellectual caution and prudence of the northern temperament and the magnificent egoism and arrogant charm of the Latins has long provided modern novelists with some of their most fascinating problems, ranging all the way from the romantic interpretations of Marion Crawford and Hall Caine to the ironic comedies of E. M. Forster, Norman Douglas, Aldous Huxley and Thornton Wilder. Establish a contact between North and South and the spark of vital emotional drama is immediately generated. The ensuing action may be only a display of satirical fireworks or it may involve a genuine conflagration.

Miss Cher reveals on every page a long-established knowledge of Roman ways. The town never obtrudes in her narrative, but its ancient spell of grandeur, wherein the pomp and splendor of life is always mixed with the intimation of death, hangs over the lives of the English expatriates up at the villa and the art students down in the city. In mind and energy her characters are consumed by desire, jealousy and frustration, and they become so involved in their relations that in spite of Miss Cher's slight concern with the more elaborate development of her meagre plot, we come to see them inextricably entangled in the web they have created about themselves.

The elderly English spinster who tells the story that centers around her villa at Monte Mario is herself unable to remain aloof from these ominous complications which plague the careers of idle or irresolute people. She is past the age when the adventures and delights of life are accessible to her, but behind the mask of gentle romantic irony the germ of malice is working in the flesh. The tragedies and disappointments of her friends, seen through her eyes, assume a pathos of triviality which is intensified by the placid majesty of Rome.

In this element we find the group of men and women Miss Cher, by her genuine gift for incisive psychological portraiture,

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has created—the neighbor Woodman, who recovers interest in life through his love for a sickly stepson, Henry Fleming; the fatuous niece Adela who disdains the devotion of the painter, George Rose, and hunts the rarer pleasure of Italian romance which Silvio, the wilful egoistic artist, nearly succeeds in giving her after he deserts his loyal friend Tatia; and the strange Russian girl, Tatia, who struggles between her Allegiance to Art and her desire for a happiness which Silvio alone can give, and who, rejecting the ardent protection of Henry Fleming, finally brings about his tragic death which breaks up the colony at the villa. In the end two lives remain unaltered. Silvio, typifying the healthy pride and creative vanity of the South, goes on to new conquests; and the spinster, still ironic, still disguising malice with gentleness, waits only for that final clarity of vision which comes before death.

Yet there is a third character that stays unchanged—Rome. Her rich churches and palaces, her streets and gardens filled with the continuous roar and whisper of fountains, and her villas whence citizen and exile alike look down upon the glowing roofs surmounted by the great dome, remain to haunt the spirit of man and observe the shifting spectacle of his life. By her profound understanding of Rome's beauty Miss Cher invests her narrative with the breath of life, and by this virtue her novel carries an air of true distinction.

MORTON DAUWEN ZABEL.

Always a Soldier

Mad Anthony Wayne, by Thomas Boyd. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $3.50.

THIS is spirited, informal reading based on facts which, despite the apparent ease of the telling, are presented somewhat spasmodically. Possibly it cannot be otherwise. Wayne's life rhythm runs in staccato measure. His battle-standard is silver sheathed; Three Rivers; Ticonderoga; Brandywine; Germantown; Valley Forge; Monmouth; Yorktown; Georgia; The Winning of the West, with his great victory over the Indians at Fallen Timber and the conclusive peace at Greenville. In the heart of the Miami country, in that "land of many rivers, running down to the brown, slow strong mother of rivers," stands the city, his last fort, named by his name.

Physical danger had always the magic quality for Anthony Wayne. Defeated three times in as many weeks, bruised by a cannon ball, grazed by a bullet in that grey, ghastly fog of Germantown, he assured his wife it had been a glorious day. According to John Fiske there was more method than madness in him, however. Mr. Boyd attempts no psychological study here. Yet we have the picture, in bold relief, of a man who, while delightfully free from pose or complex, had certain angles that his forward march through our history has obliterated. For one who found as early as Three Rivers that the breath of twisting smoke was his native air; whose terse word at the despised Councils (which Hamilton called the Most Honorable Association of Midwives) was "Fight!" he captained his soul in months of weary waiting. Ticonderoga was an "ancient Golgotha" to that restless, seeking spirit. At Valley Forge he earned from his men, through his careful plundering, the affectionate title "the Drover." Sagacious caution controlled instinctive recklessness in Georgia and the West. He regarded the British with a hot hatred but seldom despised or underrated them. After the sinister defeat of St. Clair on the Wabash, Wayne's advance into the treacherous Ohio country was as prudently and vigorously carried out as Kitchener's march into the Soudan a century later. Yet, on being passed

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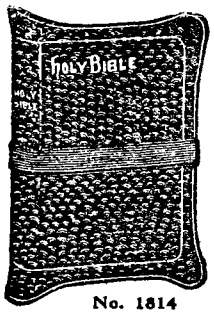

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over by that "body of men calling itself the Congress," which talked while Valley Forge anguished and died, Wayne was one of the Revolutionary generals who neither resigned nor sulked in his tent. Undaunted he welcomed a court-martial after the Paoli affair, misnamed massacre. His indifference to material success was so well known that even the thrifty New Englander, John Adams, commented on it in a moment of Wayne's martial glory: "This man's feelings must be worth a guinea a minute."

Delightfully written as this book is, especially in the western chapters where Mr. Boyd finds himself again under the shadow of the Long Knives, it presupposes an amount of Revolutionary knowledge. Owing to biographical emphasis, the history here is condensed. Although most of the facts about Wayne are included, some of them we must piece together from fragments of memory, from other books.

The life of Anthony Wayne *is* "pictorially speaking"! Nothing is more stirring in this stirring story than the description of Wayne and his men standing in the orchard on that sweltering day at Monmouth, gracefully contemptuous of the issues of life or death, holding their fire against the cold steel of Monckton's grenadiers. And he walks, forever honored, through the pages of our history as we see him on the retreat at Three Rivers: "In a uniform of blue and white, with a ruffled stock and a cocked felt hat, the colonel was stalking along the muddy road, as if he owned it and dared anyone to deny the fact."

MARTHA BAYARD.

Bravado and Monotony

The Rebels, by Alfred Neumann. New York: Alfred Knopf. $2.50.

ONE who expects much of The Rebels from the extraordinary workmanship and epic quality of The Devil, will be disappointed. The book is a dull one. The theme is not one of international interest, and presupposes, on the part of the reader, an extensive acquaintance with the minor European civil wars and revolutions of the early nineteenth century. The scene of The Rebels is laid in Italy, at the time of the Carbonari revolt. The Carbonari, one remembers, constituted a secret nationalistic party whose efforts were directed toward the unification of Italy, opposed by the Holy Alliance. It is a theme for historical research rather than for a novel, because of its complexity and local interest. And that is precisely what Neumann has achieved: a detailed piece of historical research, with a faint Sabatini flavor. Much bravado, endless intrigue, incessant plotting, a masonic atmosphere of secrecy, do not relieve the aridity of the pattern, nor make for true dramatic values.

The chief characters do not fire the imagination, as did Louis XI and Oliver. They are puppets often incomprehensible in their motives and purposes. Their emotional behavior is particularly extraordinary, and leaves one constantly frustrated. Our task were easier if they would, at least, stand out in relief; but we have to disentangle them at every step from new characters, a merciless deluge of them, forever obstructing the view. And the maze of details! Neumann has left out nothing, in his determination to portray for us the political chaos of Italy a hundred years ago.

And he is not through: judging from its title, his next book is to be a sequel to The Rebels. To this reviewer he will remain the author of The Devil.

MIREILLE HOLLARD.

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Briefer Mention

The School for Wives, by André Gide; translated by Dorothy Bussy. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.00.

ANDRÉ GIDE'S new novel is brief (it can be read in an hour) yet it does adequate justice to a story which would have tempted any English or American writer into 100,000 words at least. The School for Wives shows us the disillusionment of a sensitive and warm-hearted woman who marries a model young man, or rather, one who poses at piety, learning and industry. It is the kind of situation about which Theodore Dreiser would go into agonies, Sinclair Lewis become most savage, and Sherwood Anderson break (again) his heart. In the hands of M. Gide, neither the pathos nor the irony of the story is labored. It is one of the best things we have seen this fall, and it is even further proof that in this language we have not his fellow.

Schubert's Songs, by Richard Capell. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, Incorporated. $6.00.

ONE cannot too greatly admire the discretion and knowledge with which Mr. Capell has discussed what is at once the most popular and most difficult portion of Schubert's work. He adheres resolutely to the subject, triumphing over all temptations to write temperamental biography or grandiose description. The songs are classified intelligently, the history of each is provided, and comment that normally seems very well advised is supplied wherever appropriate. We have appreciated particularly the sections devoted to the later compositions, notable the Winterreise cycle. This seems so much the best and most practical book on the subject that one hastens to recommend it warmly.

Isles of Romance, by George Allan England. New York: The Century Company. $3.50.

TREMENDOUSLY interesting material is vitiated here by Mr. England's style which is an excellent example of how travel sketches should not be written. He seems to fail, too, to maintain the proper mental perspective. He is moved while visiting Fort Jefferson in the Dry Tortugas to "long to stage a movie there, or start a fishing-camp." Anticosti, Grand Cayman, St. Pierre, the Magdalens, Sable Island and the Islands of the Swallows lose their inherent romance when described by one who was too busy exclaiming "How romantic!" actually to savor romance.

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